

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 07289

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY VEST ONLY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: NATO, AORG, APER
SUBJECT: APPOINTMENT OF CONTROLLER FOR NATO INFRASTRUC-
TURE, CHARLES R. WILDS, FSO-1

REFS: (A) STATE 154358, (B) USNATO 07068, (C) USNATO
07173, (D) STATE 190633

1. I AM VERY DISTURBED TO RECEIVE THIS MORNING'S DEPTTEL
190633 ADVISING THAT FSO CHARLES R. WILDS, NEWLY
APPOINTED CONTROLLER FOR NATO INFRASTRUCTURE, WILL RECEIVE
NO FRENCH LANGUAGE TRAINING BEFORE HIS ARRIVAL SEPTEMBER 1
BUT SUGGESTING THAT HE THEN TAKE FOUR HOURS A DAY HERE
SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH REPORTING IN AND TAKING ON HIS DUTIES.
THIS DECISION WAS PERHAPS TAKEN BY DEPARTMENT, OR BY FSI,
WITHOUT FULL KNOWLEDGE OF LOCAL SITUATION. AS SEEN FROM
HERE, IT SEEMS A DECISION MADE LARGELY ON BUREAUCRATIC
GROUNDS. I ASK YOUR URGENT HELP IN PUTTING MATTERS RIGHT
SINCE IT INVOLVES AN ISSUE OF GOOD FAITH INVOLVING JOSEPH
LUNS.

2. FOR MONTHS HERE WE HAVE APPLIED PRESSURE AT ALL LEVELS
FOR APPOINTMENT OF CHARLES WILDS, OUR CANDIDATE FOR
CONTROLLER OF NATO INFRASTRUCTURE. THERE IS NO APPOINT-
MENT ON WHICH I HAVE PRESSED LUNS HARDER OR MORE OFTEN.
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AS YOU MAY KNOW, THE FRENCH HAVE BEEN MAKING A BIG THING
RECENTLY OF REQUIREMENT FOR IS STAFF TO HAVE FRENCH
LANGUAGE; UNFORTUNATELY, THE INFORMATION FURNISHED US BY
DEPT AS TO WILDS' FRENCH CONVERSATIONAL ABILITY WAS NOT
BORNE OUT IN WILDS' INTERVIEW WITH APPOINTMENTS STAFF.
LUNS FINALLY MADE THE APPOINTMENT OF WILDS, ALTHOUGH WITH
STRONG RELUCTANCE AND AFTER REPEATED ASSURANCES FROM US

THAT WILDS WOULD UNDERTAKE IMMEDIATELY TO BRING HIS FRENCH UP TO A REASONABLE WORKING KNOWLEDGE. AS I REPORTED IN USNATO 7068 ON JULY 20, LUNS FINALLY WENT THROUGH WITH THE APPOINTMENT NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF THE BASIC LOGIC OF IT BUT PERHAPS EVEN MORE BECAUSE WE HAD KEPT HIM UNDER CONSTANT PRESSURE. IN MY TEL JULY 20 I RECOMMENDED THAT "WILDS BEGIN IMMEDIATELY A CRASH COURSE TO BRING HIS FRENCH UP TO REASONABLE WORKING KNOWLEDGE SO THAT WE MAY KEEP OUR SIDE OF THE BARGAIN WITH NATO".

3. NOW WE ARE TOLD THAT NOTHING CAN BE DONE ABOUT LANGUAGE TRAINING FOR WILDS UNTIL AFTER HIS ARRIVAL IN BRUSSELS SEPTEMBER 1. THIS STRIKES ME AS A DECISION MADE PRIMARILY TO SATISFY THE AUGUST SCHEDULES OF FSI AND WITHOUT REGARD FOR THE ASSURANCES, IF NOT COMMITMENTS, GIVEN LUNS AND THE NATO STAFF. WILDS IS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE HERE SEPTEMBER 1 -- AND IT IS IMPORTANT THAT HE ARRIVE ON SEPTEMBER 1 -- TO HEAD AN IMPORTANT NATO ACTIVITY. IN ADDITION TO THE PERSONAL TIME NEEDED FOR SETTling IN, HE WOULD UNDER DEPT'S PROPOSAL GIVE HALF HIS WORKING DAY OVER TO LANGUAGE STUDY. HE COMES ALREADY UNDER QUESTION, AND A HALF TIME APPROACH TO THE NEW JOB WILL NOT IMPRESS OUR CRITICS. IT IS AN OPEN INVITATION TO THE FRENCH TO CHALLENGE THE APPOINTMENT, A POSSIBILITY WHICH LUNS HAS WORRIED OVER FROM THE BEGINNING. MORE IMPORTANT, WE WOULD HAVE WHELED AWAY THE PERIOD JULY 20-SEPT 1 WITH NO LANGUAGE TRAINING
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FOR WILDS; LUNS WILL CONCLUDE WE HAVE PLAYED A SHELL GAME WITH HIM, AND HE WILL NOT BE THERE THE NEXT TIME WE NEED HIM ON THIS SORT OF THING.

4. IF THERE ARE NO INSTRUCTORS AVAILABLE AT FSI, THEN LET WILDS HAVE A TWO-WEEKS TOTAL IMMERSION COURSE AT BERLITZ, OR SOME OTHER SUITABLE ARRANGEMENT WHICH I UNDERSTAND CAN BE MADE. THE POINT IS, WE HAVE ASKED LUNS TO EXTEND HIMSELF ON OUR BEHALF AND HE HAS DONE SO. HE SHOULD NOT COME OUT OF THIS WITH GROUNDS TO QUESTION OUR GOOD FAITH AND HOLD THIS FEELING IN RESERVE FOR THE FUTURE.

5. I AM SORRY TO TROUBLE YOU WITH THIS SORT OF THING, BUT BELIEVE IT OF SUFFICIENT IMPORTANCE IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SECRETARY GENERAL TO ASK YOUR GOOD OFFICES IN INSURING THAT WILDS ARRIVES HERE SEPTEMBER 1 WITH AT LEAST A MINIMUM OF LANGUAGE REFRESHER COURSE BEHIND HIM.
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